Town of Nags Head

CAMA LAND AND WATER USE PLAN UPDATE

AGENDA

1ˢᵗ LEAD PLANNING GROUP (LPG) MEETING
7:00 P.M. – WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2005
LOCATION: NAGS HEAD BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING ROOM

1. Introductions
2. Overview of the Land & Water Use Plan process
3. Role of the Lead Planning Group (LPG)
4. Draft Citizen Participation Plan (CPP)
5. Key issues in the plan
6. Next steps

Slide 1

Town of Nags Head
2005-2006
CAMA Land and Water Use Plan

Lead Planning Group
Kick-off Meeting
October 12, 2005

Slide 2

LAND AND WATER USE PLAN OVERVIEW

- Two Phases
  - Phase I: Now through May 2006
  - Phase II: May 2006 through May 2007
- Phase I Activities:
  - Scoping
  - Establish Lead Planning Group
  - Public outreach & survey
  - Baseline & future conditions
  - Identify key concerns
  - Review previous plan
  - Develop Town vision statement / management topics

Slide 3

AGENDA

- Overview of the Land & Water Use Plan process
- Role of the Lead Planning Group (LPG)
- Draft Citizen Participation Plan (CPP)
- Key issues in the plan
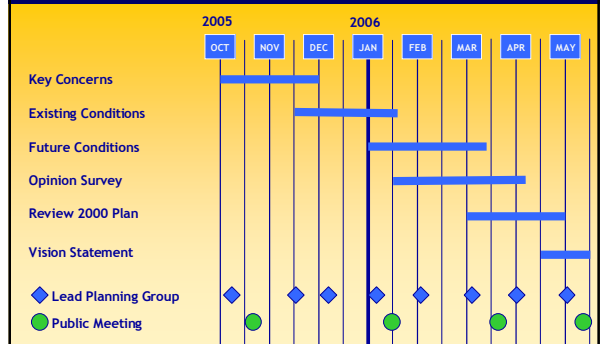- Next steps

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Slide 4

LAND AND WATER USE PLAN OVERVIEW

- Phase II activities:
  - Update Citizen Participation Plan
  - Develop Goals and Objectives for Policies
  - Review Previous Policies
  - Future Land Use Map
  - Develop Draft Plan
  - Board & Public Review / Comment
  - Revise Plan & Submit to DCM
  - Adopt Plan & CRC Certification

Slide 5

LAND AND WATER USE PLAN OVERVIEW

- Required by NC Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA)
- Approval: Coastal Resources Commission
- Guides policies / development
- Long term plan updated every 5 years
- Last plan adopted in 2000
  - Policy development and prioritization
  - Land suitability analysis
  - Public input & review

Slide 6

LAND AND WATER USE PLAN OVERVIEW

	2005			2006				
	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
Key Concerns								
Existing Conditions								
Future Conditions								
Opinion Survey								
Review 2000 Plan								
Vision Statement								
◆ Lead Planning Group								
● Public Meeting								

LAND AND WATER USE PLAN OVERVIEW

- NC State College of Design parallel study of Beach Road development issues
- Focus on community design issues
- Public involvement efforts will be integrated with Land Use Plan
- CAMA Plan will incorporate recommendations

LEAD PLANNING GROUP

- Role: Why are you here?
  - Advisory body to provide guidance
  - Provide unique perspective
  - Sounding board
  - Support the Plan process
  - Increase public participation
  - Plan presentation / recommendation

SCOPING PROCESS

- Scoping completed and reviewed by Board of Commissioners in Spring 2005
- Sets framework for type of plan to be developed
- General discussion of planning environment & community concerns
  - General growth & redevelopment
  - Diversity of housing / tourist accommodations
  - Large residential structures
  - Stormwater management

LEAD PLANNING GROUP

- How can you help?
  - Select a chair
  - Regularly attend meetings
  - Provide your thoughts and ideas
  - Advertise the Plan

LEAD PLANNING GROUP

- Diverse groups participating
  - Business associations
  - Residents / neighborhood groups
  - Government agencies
  - Community organizations

"RULES"

- Raise your hand
- Don't interrupt
- Consider other perspectives
- Stay on subject
- Be concise
- Be respectful and polite

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

- Tool to encourage public input
- States methods and desired outcomes
- Schedule of outreach activities
- Draft for your review & comment
- Living document – can change throughout process

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

- Public survey
  - Last completed in 1996
  - Designed to gauge public on key issues
  - Quantify interests / opinions
  - Mailed to residents & property owners

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

- Outreach tools
  - Public meetings
  - Email broadcasts
  - Phone interviews
  - Website
  - Opinion survey
  - Workshops / forums

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

- Lead Planning Group Meetings
  1. Kick-off, review CPP
  2. CPP, public meeting, survey input
  3. Survey input, key issues, review public input
  4. Review existing conditions, growth trends, prepare for next public meeting
  5. Review public meeting; approve survey design; review forecasts
  6. Review survey results; review 2000 Plan's implementation; review natural systems analysis
  7. Refine draft vision statement; discuss
  8. Finalize vision statement; Preview Phase II activities

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

- Four public outreach meetings
  - OCTOBER 27, 2005:
    - Public workshop to kickoff project / solicit issues
  - Late November 2005:
    - Review of key issues / survey input
  - Early March 2006:
    - Review of survey findings / prioritize key concerns
  - May 2006:
    - Special board meeting to adopt vision

KEY ISSUES

- What's important to this group?

NEXT STEPS

- Review Citizen Participation Plan
- Identify / refine key issues
- Preliminary input for survey development
- Publicize the plan process!

Town of Nags Head
2005-2006
CAMA Land and Water Use Plan

Lead Planning Group
Kick-off Meeting
October 12, 2005

Town of Nags Head, NC
2005-2006 CAMA Land and Water Use Plan Update
DRAFT Citizen Participation Plan

Background

This Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) is developed to provide a formal public participation program for the development of the 2005-2006 CAMA Land and Water Use Plan (the Plan). The Town of Nags Head is required to develop the CPP because the Town is using CAMA funds to assist with preparation of the Plan. This CPP satisfies the requirements of the state-funded CAMA Land and Water Use Plan contained in 15A NCAC Subchapter 7L, Local Planning and Management Grants.

The Land and Water Use Plan, created with input from residents, non-resident property owners, business owners, Town Boards and Committees, State and Federal agencies, as well as other stakeholders, establishes the vision for the community and formulates the goals, objectives, and strategies for achieving that vision. Many of the Town's regulations and initiatives are a direct result of the policies included in the Land and Water Use Plan.

As evidenced by this Citizen Participation Plan, the Town will be making a substantial effort to solicit public input. Part of this includes assembling a diverse group of individuals and community representatives to formulate the Lead Planning Group, which will serve as a steering committee to guide Staff's efforts and advise the Board of Commissioners throughout this process. Additionally, the CPP will "employ a variety of educational efforts and participation techniques to assure that all socio-economic segments of the community and non-resident property owners have opportunities to participate during plan development" [15A NCAC 7L .0506 (a)]. CPP activities will occur throughout the Plan development process (see Appendix A for a Plan schedule).

The CPP includes four major components:
1. Lead Planning Group
2. Initial public information meetings
3. Public participation tools
4. Meeting schedule

The following sections further describe each of these components.

Section 1: Lead Planning Group (LPG)
The Lead Planning Group has been designated by the Town to act in an advisory capacity throughout the development of the Plan. The Town's Board of Commissioners selected a large and diverse group of stakeholders to participate as members of the LPG. The Board identified groups and individuals to contact based upon the interests they represent in the Town and/or Dare County. Representatives from organizations, associations and community groups were specifically sought due to their ability to further involve the members of their associations in the development of the Plan.

The Town has contracted with Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc. to act as facilitator throughout the Plan development process. The consultant will facilitate all LPG and public meetings with assistance from Town staff.

Town of Nags Head, NC
2005-2006 CAMA Land and Water Use Plan Update
DRAFT Citizen Participation Plan

Membership
Invitations to participate on the LPG were sent by the Town on September 23, 2005.
Appendix A lists the current LPG representatives. The following organizations (listed
below) were requested to provide a representative to the LPG.

The Nature Conservancy - Nags Head Woods	Town of Nags Head Board of Adjustment	Old Nags Head Cove Homeowners Association (North)
Friends of Jockey's Ridge	Town of Nags Head Planning Board	Town of Nags Head Board of Commissioners
Outer Banks Community Foundation	Nags Head Acres Homeowners Association	Outer Banks Visitors Bureau
Outer Banks Community Development Corporation	Outer Banks Kiwanis Club	North Ridge Homeowners Association
North Carolina Aquarium	Dare County Board of Education	Outer Banks Homebuilders Association
Dare County Planning Board	Gallery Row Merchants	South Creek Acres Homeowners Association
Jockey's Ridge State Park	North Carolina Department of Transportation	North Carolina Coastal Federation
Dare County Restaurant Association	Outer Banks Transportation Task Force	Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce
Nags Head Pond Homeowners Association	Outer Banks Surfrider Foundation	Nags Head Surf Fishing Club
Outer Banks Association of Realtors	National Park Service - Cape Hatteras National Seashore	Old Nags Head Cove Homeowners Association (South)
Dare County Arts Council	Villa Dunes Property Owners	Town of Kill Devil Hills
Dare County Board of Commissioners	Town of Nags Head Citizens Advisory Committee	Nags Head Community Watch Program
Village at Nags Head Property Owners Association	Wheels of Dare	Thomas A. Baum Senior Center

Role & Authority

As an advisory committee created specifically for the purpose of updating the Plan, the
LPG's role is to guide the Town staff and Board of Commissioners in the development of
the Plan. The LPG will serve in an advisory capacity to the Town of Nags Head staff and
the Board of Commissioners (Board). The LPG has the authority to make
recommendations to the Board regarding the Plan's development and adoption. The
Board shall remain ultimately responsible for the adoption of the Plan and its associated
policies.

Responsibilities
Several responsibilities have been identified for the members of the LPG:

1. Establish a chairperson
The chairperson will focus and lead the LPG. The chairperson will assist the
Consultant and Town Staff to facilitate LPG meetings. When necessary, the

chairperson shall request LPG members to vote on issues or recommendations in order to reach consensus as a group.

2. Attend meetings
The primary responsibility of each LPG member is to be an active participant in the development of the Plan. Attendance and contribution to the discussion at each LPG meeting is essential to foster the development of the Plan.

3. Participate in outreach activities
Several outreach activities are included in the development of the Plan (see Section 4 below). LPG members are requested to assist the Town to publicize and make successful all efforts to solicit input to the Plan. Members of the LPG will be requested to be active participants at public outreach activities. The LPG will act as "ambassadors" of the planning process, ensuring that issues raised by the public are documented and discussed in the Plan.

4. Provide input at milestones / decision points
The LPG will review materials related to the development of the Plan and will provide input at project milestones and decision points. A few of the areas the LPG will review during Phase I of the Plan include:

- draft version of this Citizen Participation Plan
- draft survey instrument
- summary of survey findings
- public comments
- key issues
- existing conditions assessment
- draft vision statement

During Phase II the LPG will participate in the following activities:

- update citizen participation plan
- develop goals and objectives for policies
- review previous policies
- future land use map
- develop draft plan
- present Plan to the Board
- Review comments from public / Board
- revise Plan

5. Advise the Town staff and Board of Commissioners
The LPG will act in an advisory capacity to the Town Staff and Board of Commissioners for all issues related to development of the Plan.

- content of public outreach activities
- data & forecast analyses
- project deliverables
- provide recommendations for board actions

Section 2: Initial public information meetings

An initial public information meeting will occur on October 27, 2005 at 7PM to inform citizens about the purpose of the CAMA land use plan and the steps that will be taken to update it. A notice was published in the *Coastland Times* on September 23, 2005. A second notice will be published in the *Coastland Times* on Thursday October 13, 2005. (See Appendix C for copies of the Notices). The notices were conveyed to the Coastal Resources Advisory Council members and to the district DCM planner.

The meeting format will be an open-house style workshop with display maps and exhibits depicting some of the issues that came from the scoping session. The public will be invited to speak about key issues to be addressed in the Plan.

Section 3: Public participation tools

There are several objectives of the citizen participation process. These objectives are met with various public participation tools: The table below highlights the major citizen participation tools intended for the Nags Head Plan. The tools will be used throughout the planning progress.

Education - improving stakeholders' understanding of the impact that land use and development issues have on their quality of life and increasing the community's understanding of CAMA and the land use planning process.

Listening - improving the local planning team's understanding of the values of the community's stakeholders, the issues that are important to them, and how stakeholders perceive that the land use plan will affect them.

Collaboration – creating opportunities for working with stakeholders to identify alternative plan solutions, to identify the impacts of favored solutions on stakeholders, and to work toward community consensus.

Support – creating a base of support in the community for implementation of the policies and programs embodied in the plan.

Method	Description / Purpose	Target Audience	Anticipated Results
Email Broadcast	• Sent regularly to provide Plan updates • Meeting invitations & reminders	• Email list • Plan mailing list	• Education • Support
Government Access TV	• Notices & updates broadcast to TV viewers • Meeting invitations & reminders	• Residents	• Education
Targeted Phone Interviews	• Solicit stakeholder input on key issues • Build dialogue between Town & key stakeholders	• Key stakeholders	• Education • Listening • Collaboration
Design Charette / Visioning	• Provide information about Plan progress • Gather public input regarding design issues • Develop draft recommendations / designs for specific areas	• Residents • Property owners	• Education • Listening • Collaboration • Support
Town Website	• Post information & draft materials for review	• Residents • Property owners • Visitors	• Education
Town Newsletter	• Provide information about Plan progress • Build support through stories about Plan importance	• Town residents	• Education
Survey Instrument	• Request opinions on key issues	• Residents • Property owners	• Listening
Published notices	• Meeting invitations & reminders Provide notices regarding	• Residents	• Education
Newspaper articles	• Provide information about Plan progress • Build support through stories about Plan importance	• Residents	• Education • Support
Public Workshops / Community Forum	• Provide information • Request feedback • Enable public comment • Build dialogue & support for Plan	• Residents • Property owners	• Education • Listening • Collaboration • Support
Focus Groups	• Solicit stakeholder input on key issues	• Key stakeholders	• Listening • Support
Public Hearings	• Present draft vision statement • Listen to public comment	• Residents • Property owners	• Education • Listening

At the end of Phase I and at the conclusion of the Plan, a summary report of all public outreach activities will be prepared. The report will document the activities listed in the

table above and will more fully describe the anticipated results compared to actual results achieved through the Citizen Participation Process.

Section 4: Meeting schedule
The following is a general outline of topics and activities scheduled for the lead planning group and public meetings.

LPG Meeting 1: Organization and overview of the land use planning process; review of CPP; preliminary input on key issues; prepare for first public meeting

First Public Workshop: Describe purpose for Plan; Review 2000 Plan; Solicit input for key issues

LPG Meeting 2: Review results of first public meeting; revise CPP; More input on key issues;

LPG Meeting 3: Review existing conditions analysis; refine key issues; coordinate with Beach Road study; preliminary input for survey design

LPG Meeting 4: Review growth trends; more input for survey design; prepare for 2nd public outreach meeting

Second Public Workshop: Summarize key issues identified to date; seek input / refinement; present topics for opinion survey

LPG Meeting 5: Review results of second public meeting; approve survey design; review growth forecasts

LPG Meeting 6: Review draft results of survey; review natural systems analysis; discuss 2000 plan implementation; review draft vision statement; prepare for third public outreach meeting

Third Public Workshop: Summarize findings from opinion survey; present summaries of existing conditions, forecasts, and natural systems analyses; preliminary input for draft vision statement

LPG Meeting 7: Review third public workshop; refine draft vision statement; review implementation deficiencies from 2000 Plan

LPG Meeting 8: Finalize draft vision statement; define management topics; review of Phase I & preview of Phase II activities

Fourth Public Workshop (Hearing): Present draft vision statement for adoption; overview of Phase II activities

THE WEEK OF:

DATE	10/10/05	10/17/05	10/24/05	10/31/05	11/7/05	11/14/05	11/21/05	11/28/05	12/5/05	12/12/05	12/19/05	12/26/05	1/2/06	1/9/06	1/16/06	1/23/06	1/30/06	2/6/06	2/13/06	2/20/06	2/27/06	3/6/06	3/13/06	3/20/06	3/27/06	4/3/06	4/10/06	4/17/06	4/24/06	5/1/06	5/8/06	5/15/06	5/22/06	5/29/06
WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
TASK																																		
Citizen Participation Plan		■	■																															
Initial Outreach			■	■	■																													
Identify Key Concerns					■	■	■																											
Define Project Mapping					■	■																												
Analyze Existing Conditions								■	■																									
Map Existing Conditions									■	■	■																							
Identify Growth Trends											■	■																						
Design Survey Instrument													■	■																				
Prepare & Mail Survey															■	■	■																	
Compile / Analyze Survey Results																					■	■												
Report Survey Results																							■	■										
Forecast future growth																■	■	■																
Develop Build Out Scenario																		■	■															
Analyze Natural Systems																				■	■													
Map Environmental Conditions																			■	■	■													
Land Suitability Analysis																							■	■										
Review 2000 CAMA Plan																							■	■										
ID Deficiencies in 2000 Plan Implementation																										■	■							
Refine key concerns / emerging issues																										■	■	■						
Prepare & Adopt Vision Statement																															■	■		
Define Management Topics																																	■	■
PUBLIC MEETINGS			▣												▣										▣									▣
LPG MEETINGS	▮					▮				▮			▮						▮				▮					▮				▮		

October 10, 2005

Organization	Contact Name
The Nature Conservancy - Nags Head Woods	Aaron McCall
Old Nags Head Cove Homeowners Association (North)	Bel Pitcher
Friends of Jockey's Ridge	Billy Moseley
Town of Nags Head Planning Board	Bo Taylor
Town of Nags Head Board of Commissioners	Bob Muller
Outer Banks Community Foundation	Bob Oakes
Nags Head Acres Homeowners Association	Buster Nunemaker
Outer Banks Visitors Bureau	Carolyn McCormick
Outer Banks Community Development Corporation	Charles Poe
Outer Banks Kiwanis Club	Chuck Parker
North Ridge Homeowners Association	David Gourley
North Carolina Aquarium	David Griffin
Dare County Board of Education	John Donlan
Outer Banks Homebuilders Association	Russell Lay
Dare County Planning Board	Elmer Midgett
Gallery Row Merchants	Gail Kowalski
South Creek Acres Homeowners Association	Garry Oliver
Jockey's Ridge State Park	George Barnes
North Carolina Department of Transportation	Gretchen Byrum
North Carolina Coastal Federation	Jan DeBlieu
Dare County Restaurant Association	Jeff Metcalf
Outer Banks Transportation Task Force	Jody Crosswhite
Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce	Ralph Buxton
Nags Head Pond Homeowners Association	John Munnelly
Outer Banks Surfrider Foundation	John Wasniewski
Nags Head Surf Fishing Club	Kearns Lowman
Outer Banks Association of Realtors	Mark Cornwell
National Park Service - Cape Hatteras National Seashore	Patrick Reed
Old Nags Head Cove Homeowners Association (South)	Paula Farah
Dare County Arts Council	Peggy Saporito
Villa Dunes Property Owners/Nags Head Community Watch Program	Perry White
Villa Dunes Property Owners/Nags Head Community Watch Program	Kaye White
Town of Kill Devil Hills	Sherry Rollason
Dare County Board of Commissioners	Stan White
Town of Nags Head Citizens Advisory Committee / Board of Adjustment	Susan Boncek
Village at Nags Head Property Owners Association	Tom Saporito
Village at Nags Head Property Owners Association	Peggy Saporito
Wheels of Dare	Bill Brobst
Thomas A. Baum Senior Center	Brandi Rheubottom

October 10, 2005

Town of Nags Head

PUBLIC MEETING

TOWN OF NAGS HEAD CAMA LAND AND WATER USE PLAN UPDATE

7:00 P.M. – THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2005

LOCATION: NAGS HEAD BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING ROOM

The Town of Nags Head is preparing to update one of its most important policy documents – the CAMA (Coastal Area Management Act) Land and Water Use Plan. The Land and Water Use Plan, created with input from residents, non-resident property owners, business owners, Town Boards and Committees, State and Federal agencies, as well as other stakeholders, establishes the vision for our community and formulates the goals, objectives, and strategies for achieving that vision.

Many of the Town's regulations and initiatives are a direct result of the policies included in the Land and Water Use Plan; some of the topics to be addressed will include management of growth and development, beach nourishment, stormwater management, transportation, water quality and environmental protection, recreation and open space, the local economy, and hazard mitigation.

The Town has always emphasized the importance of the planning process and will be making a substantial effort to solicit public participation during this project. In order to develop a successful plan, it will be vital that the Town receives input from a wide range of interest groups and individuals.

This will be the first of several opportunities to participate in the creation of our Land and Water Use Plan. This first meeting will focus primarily on the methods and steps the Town will take to develop the plan and to gather citizen input throughout the two year course of this project. Your input will be a key component of the Land and Water Use Plan; please plan on attending this important meeting (Thursday, October 27th at 7:00 p.m.) and be thinking about the things you would like to share with us as we move forward.

If you have additional questions about the meeting, or if you cannot attend but would like to share your comments, please contact Andy Garman or Bruce Bortz with the Nags Head Planning and Development Department at 252-441-7016.

Chapter 24.

POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION METHODS

The following are policies which represent and summarize the majority of the action policies in the previous chapters. Along with each policy are the implementation methods necessary for achieving that policy. CAMA requires that all adopted policies and implementation methods be achievable by local governments and are within the fiscal constraints and management system of local governments.

Following each policy (in parentheses) is the priority for that policy. The timing for completion of policies are based upon the priority assigned and are as follows: Highest Priority; High Priority; Priority; and Low Priority.

Some policies which were rated less than High Priority represent issues and concerns which: (1) may not demand considerable Staff time and resources; (2) are beyond the direct control of the Town; or (3) are on-going projects to which the Town is committed.

POLICIES

1. The Town recognizes beach nourishment as our preferred alternative for addressing the impacts from barrier island migration and ocean erosion. However, the Town also supports a variety of methods to abate the impacts to ocean erosion, these include, but are not limited to acquisition of threatened structures, relocation of threatened structures and the establishment of innovative technology or designs which may be considered experimental, which can be evaluated by the CRC to determine consistency with 15A NCAC 7M .0200 and the other general and specific use standards with the CAMA rules. (Highest Priority)

   Implementing actions

   A. The Town will sponsor studies designed to determine the financial contribution the beach makes to the Outer Banks and the region.

   B. The Town will acquire oceanfront property when the opportunity arises.

   C. The Town will investigate mitigation programs and grants to assist the property owner in the relocation of threatened structures.

2. The Town supports beach nourishment projects for the Town beaches subject to commensurate funding appropriations from federal, state and local sources. The Town will support and encourage the establishment of a statewide beach management strategy and policy along with a dedicated funding program designed specifically for beach restoration and nourishment projects. (Highest Priority)

   Implementing actions

   A. The Town will actively lobby the State for a state policy and strategy on beach nourishment and beach renourishment.

   B. The Town will lobby the State to establish an annually state funded statewide nourishment program.

   C. The Town will seek funding from local and regional sources to assist with the local match for federally funded beach nourishment projects.

   D. As an alternative to relying on private dredging contractors for beach nourishment and renourishment the Town will investigate or request the investigation of the feasibility of either a local or a state funded and operated dredge.

3. The Town recognizes that the ocean beaches are our single greatest asset. Fundamental elements important to the Town include, clean beaches, ample recreational access opportunities, no commercialization, reasonable beach driving regulations and the prompt resolution of user conflicts as they arise. (Highest Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town will not allow or permit any commercialization of the Town's ocean beaches.

    B. When the opportunity arises, the Town will acquire oceanfront property for access and open space.

    C. The Town will make a financial commitment including additional personnel and equipment if needed to keep our ocean beaches clean on debris and litter.

    D. The Town shall seek financial assistance from the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau for funds to clean up the beach when the beach becomes impacted for example: with debris from a storm; fish kills; whale stranding, and other events which impact the attractiveness of the beach.

4. The Commercial Outdoor Recreational Use Overlay Zoning district was established to accommodate the ever-growing commercial recreational development requests made to the Town. It shall be a policy of the Town to periodically review the adequacy of these regulations and make the necessary modifications when public health, safety and welfare issues arise. The Town shall not enlarge the Overlay district and shall consider reducing the District in size or amending the uses when conflicts develop.(Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town shall consider reducing either the size of the Commercial Outdoor Recreational District, or the number of personal watercraft vendors when an existing rental operation ceases operation and is converted to another use.

    B. The Town shall not increase the number of rental PWC units allowed to be rented at each site and shall consider reducing the number of rental PWC units and vendors (currently two) on the south side of the Causeway when the opportunity arises.

5. Mitigation represents a proactive approach to reducing the vulnerability of risk to properties in the Town. The Town will investigate innovative programs and seek funds for mitigation measures such as relocation of threatened structures and more stringent building codes for high hazard areas that support the growth management policies of the Town. (High Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town shall investigate the feasibility of becoming a FEMA "Project Impact" community..

    B. The Town shall consider the applicability of requiring "V Zone" structural certification for structures in the 100-year (A) flood zone.

    C. The Town will consider amendments to our Flood Ordinance which addresses freeboard and other flood mitigative measures recognized by FEMA and the CRS program to reduce flood loses.

6. The Town shall consider higher flood regulatory standards for vehicle and equipment storage areas and structures or facilities that produce, use or store highly volatile, flammable, explosive, toxic and or water-reactive materials that may cause environmental problems if flooded or destroyed. (Highest Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town shall develop a program to identify businesses and material storage areas where significant amounts of toxic or hazardous products are stored which would be subject to flooding.

B. The Town shall develop regulations to require fuel tanks, including LP tanks to be adequately anchored to prevent flotation or submersion in the event of flooding.

7. The Town will work with and petition NCDOT for (1), the necessary road improvements in getting people to the town, (2) finding ways to reduce the number of vehicles and reduce traffic congestion within the Town on US 158 and (3), increase efficiency on NC 12 and US 158. Such improvements including, but not limited to medians, a flyover at Whalebone Junction, signal coordination, new signals or the removal of existing signals. (High Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town will annually review and forward to NCDOT through the TIP process transportation improvement projects, studies, and improvements desired by the Town.

8. **Thoroughfare Plan.** The Town conceptually accepts the Outer Banks Thoroughfare Plan dated March 1996 and Town supports improvements, such as adding grassed medians where appropriate on US 158 which are designed to enhance safety for citizens and visitors, however the Town does not favor improving those cross streets which have been identified by NCDOT in the connecting NC 12 and US 158 until a need has been demonstrated. (High Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town will work with NCDOT to request changes to the Plan which reflect the current road and traffic conditions within the Town.

    B. The Town will work with NCDOT to adequately represent "paper streets" and will resist the withdrawal of existing unimproved streets unless it can be shown that such a withdrawal is in the public good.

9. **Town Streets**. The Town will evaluate all future development for its impact on traffic congestion and manage this development so as to minimize its impact on traffic. More specifically, the Town encourages development to exit on side streets rather than South Croatan Highway. (Highest Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town will develop regulations limiting access to US 158; NC 12, NC 1243 and US 64-264 when access can be obtained either through a side street or common drive aisle.

    B. The Town will consider developing regulations which addresses multiple cub cuts onto Town streets.

10. During the subdivision process the Town shall require wider rights-of-ways and greater construction standard to proposed town streets when it can be demonstrated that the proposed street may be required to accept local traffic from other nearby streets which may be damaged or threatened or closed by natural events. (Low Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town will develop regulations requiring a greater street standard (dimensional and construction) where it can be reasonable demonstrated that near-by streets may de destroyed by a storm or other natural event and the proposed street will be required to accept greater amounts of traffic due to the loss of near by streets.

11. **Sidewalks**. The Town places a high value on and encourages the use of alternative means of transportation including sidewalks. The Town will lobby and work with NCDOT for construction of a detached multi use path along the east side NC 12. The Town will cooperate with NCDOT and other municipalities in developing a coordinate pedestrian multi-use path on the Outer Banks. (Highest Priority)

    Implementing actions

A. The Town will review and update the Nags Head Pedestrian Transportation System Plan adopted on November 6, 1996.

B. The town will submit funding requests through the CIP and budget process for the implementation of the five and ten year plans and shall coordinate these plans with NCDOT when appropriate

C. The Town shall consider incentives for commercial development which provide pedestrian and bicycle amenities (e.g., sidewalks, bike racks) to improve circulation within and to their site.

12. The Town will continue to install sidewalks within Town right-of-ways to facilitate pedestrian traffic and movement to recreational sites and amenities and other areas which generate pedestrian traffic when the need is demonstrated. The Town will install these sidewalk improvements to correspond with existing and proposed NCDOT's signalization plan. (High Priority)

Implementing actions

A. The Town will identify recreational sites where sidewalks would facilitate pedestrian traffic to these recreational facilities and will submit funding requests through the budget and CIP process.

13. The Town shall consider requiring the installation sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities as part of the required infrastructure and improvements for new subdivisions. (Low Priority)

Implementing actions

A. The Town will consider amendments to the subdivision ordinance requiring the installations of sidewalks in areas identified in the "Nags Head Pedestrian Transportation System Plan".

14. The preferred form of sewage treatment and disposal shall be the on-site septic systems. The Town realizes that proper maintenance of septic systems and strict enforcement of local and state rules are essential for their safe operation and through the Septic Health Initiative Committee. The Town shall develop a Management Plan as well as preventative and educational programs for distribution to residents and visitors designed to identify and correct failing septic systems. (Highest Priority)

Implementing actions

A. The Town shall develop a management plan and educational program to implement the above actions.

15. Proper placement and maintenance of septic systems located in close proximity to drainage ditches or located near the ocean or sound are essential for maintaining high water quality standards. When septic systems fail, effluent can enter these waters and lead to health concerns and closures. The Town does not consider a water classification of SB or SC acceptable and will support research to determine the sources of pollution and consider or lobby for additional regulations or enforcement of existing regulations to prevent further degradation and shall seek measures to enhance water quality where needed. (High Priority)

Implementing actions

A. The town shall apply for grant funds for projects that are designed to improve or prevent further degradation of water quality of our ocean and sound system.

B. The Town will fund or assist in funding a water quality-testing program.

C. The Town shall seek funding and shall support water quality testing of the ocean and sound waters to determine the extent, if any of non-point sources of pollution

D. The Town shall seek strict enforcement of existing laws and regulations and shall consider new regulations, if needed, to protect estuarine and ocean water quality.

16. The Town shall continually assess and evaluate the Stormwater Management Plan and update the plan when necessary and shall actively work to minimize the rate and amount of stormwater runoff into ocean and sound waters and the impact that stormwater has on those waters. (Low Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town shall review the adequacy and amend as need the Stormwater Management Plan.

17. The Town recognizes that maintenance is essential for the proper functioning of the ocean and sound outfalls shall actively lobby NCDOT for continued maintenance. The Town will work to eliminate existing ocean and estuarine outfalls when economically viable alternatives exist for land disposal. (Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town will investigate the feasibility of land disposal and storm water retention in leu of outfalls and shall seek funds and grants or lobby NCDOT where the feasibility exists for land application of stormwater.

18. The Town recognizes that when ocean beaches and estuarine areas and waters are closed for health reasons, proper public notification of the closures is essential for public safety. The Town will work with the respective regulatory agencies to develop a protocol and to ensure that public notification is released in a timely manner after careful monitoring has indicated that the agreed upon standards have been exceeded. (Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town will initiate meetings with the County to develop and establish water quality and monitoring standards and to develop a protocol for public notification when beaches and waters are closed for health reasons.

19. The Town shall continually assess the Town's water processing capacity, storage capacity and distribution system along with monitoring adequate pressure and fire supply and shall make the necessary system improvements when needed. The Town recognizes the importance of a dual or looped water supply system for pressure, service and fire supply and will continue to loop the system when opportunities and funding permits. (Low Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town shall develop a five-year and 20 year improvement plan and request funding through either the budget or CIP process to implement that plan.

20. The Town realizes that vacation rentals and seasonal rentals, and particularly, the rental of large oceanfront homes, while promoting the single-family tourist rental economy, can significantly impact Town municipal resources and infrastructure. The Town shall comprehensively review impacts that these large structures have on the resources, municipal services, and neighboring properties and amend zoning and Town regulation accordingly. (High Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town will consider expanding the scope of the vacation rental impact committee to address impacts caused by the rental of high occupancy vacation and seasonal homes.

    B. The Town will not amend the zoning ordinance or any development regulation which would result in either increased density (units/acre) or increased intensity of these homes.

21. The Town will maintain its relative self-sufficiency by providing adequate services and amenities for residents and visitors and shall provide municipal services in a flexible, cost effective, customer friendly manner. The Town will continue to review and modify fees as needed, including the addition of new facilities fees to pay for new and continued development of Town infrastructure

while requiring private development to fund the installation of infrastructure needed by the proposed development. (Priority)

Implementing actions

A. The Town will review and update as needed land development fees in the adopted fee schedule and level of service provided by those fees.

22. As the existing housing stock ages, the Town shall consider incentives and regulations to help ensure that the replacement housing stock is in keeping with the "Nags Head image". (Low Priority)

Implementing actions

A. The Town will develop an incentive program designed to help ensure that replacement housing will be in keeping with the "Nags Head image" or vernacular.

23. Open space and green space are important elements in the Nags Head image. The Town will inventory open space, actively pursue grants and funding opportunities and develop and implement a plan to acquire and preserve open space throughout the Town. (Highest Priority)

Implementing actions

A. The town will identify important areas to be acquired as open space and shall request funds for acquisition of these areas through the budget, CIP, and grant process.

B. The Town will consider an incentive program rewarding those developers which set aside additional open space in perpetuity

24. The historic district represents an irreplaceable part of the Nags Head image and past. The Town shall carefully consider any proposed land use change-not only within the district, but near by that would diminish the uniqueness of the homes in the district. The Town will promote the creation of a historic district to preserve the historic beach front cottages but will not establish such a district until a majority of the affected property owners support it.(Low Priority)

Implementing actions

A. When requested and supported by a majority of the affected residents, the Town will establish an historic district.

B. The Town will continue to amend the zoning ordinance by adopting provisions designed to protect the uniqueness of homes on the National Register of Historic Places.

25. The Town shall continue to address community appearance concerns through the existing boards (Planning Board, Citizens Advisory Committee and Board of Commissioners). The Town shall work toward developing incentives designed to enhance, promote and protect the Town's architectural image and heritage and will consider the creation of an Appearance Commission and or a Corridor Commission to promote the general appearance of the Town. (High Priority)

Implementing actions

A. The town will investigate the feasibility for an architectural incentive program.

26. The Town views the preservation of dunes, vegetation and topography as an important component in the Nags Head image and shall strictly enforce the existing applicable rules and regulations and seek additional measures as needed to preserve these elements as much as possible. (High Priority)

Implementing actions

A. The Town will consider applying similar rules and regulations that are applicable for residential districts in the commercial districts for the preservation of dunes, topography, and vegetation

27. The Town recognizes that damaged homes and structures on the oceanfront represent a nuisance, eyesore and visual blight and the Town shall take appropriate measures to abate this nuisance and will seek changes in NFIP regulations to establish realistic regulations for declaration of destroyed structures. (Highest Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town will take a more proactive approach to condemning these structures and taking prompt action including the issuance of civil citations to abate the nuisance.

    B. The Town will petition FEMA through our state and regional NFIP representatives to consider adopting realistic regulations regarding the determination of destroyed structures.

28. The continued success of the Town as a tourist and vacation destination depends in part on the continued use and expansion of recreational uses and activities on the ocean shoreline and in the sound. The Town shall provide an adequate mix of recreational access sites for residents and visitors in order that they can enjoy the ocean and estuarine shoreline and water recreational opportunities. (High Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town will continue to apply for grants for ocean and sound access sites.

    B. The Town shall consider establishing larger, less traditional estuarine access sites that can function as access sites but also shore recreation areas and parks.

29. The Town shall actively plan and seek funds for the development of traditional recreation uses as the needs are identified and shall consider acquiring and developing small neighborhood recreation areas as funds become available. (High Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town shall through the recreation committee identify funding opportunities for expansion of recreation facilities including parks, play areas and large recreation areas.

    B. The Town shall address recreational needs through the budget and CIP process.

30. The Town shall pursue the designation of Nags Head Woods as an Area of Environmental Concern (AEC). (Low Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town will investigate the need for designation of the Woods as an AEC, and shall petition the Division of Coastal Management for AEC designation if desired.

31. It is the policy of the Town to continually assess the police, fire and rescue needs of the Town and to make personnel and resource expenditures commensurate with the needs created by development and the changing nature of the social environment. (Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. Public safety funding requests shall be handled through the budget and CIP process.

    B. The Town shall identify grant opportunities, as they become available.

32. The Town shall consider the impact on public safety during the review of site plans and during consideration for proposed changes to the zoning ordinance and shall encourage the use of sprinkler systems, stand pipes and the provision for fire lanes as important fire prevention measures.(Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Department of Public Safety shall recommend changes to the Town code as conditions warrant.

33. The Town shall provide the most effective and economical methods for the collection, disposal, and recycling of solid waste. (Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town shall periodically review existing practices to determine the most effective and economical methods for collecting and processing of solid waste.

34. The Town will assess the effectiveness of its communication efforts with residents and non-resident property owners. (Highest Priority)

    Implementing actions

    A. The Town will publish four newsletters a year.

B. The Town will continue to update the Town's web page and add additional components as needed.

Table 24.1. Interrelationships of Policies

	Policies *	Mission and Vision Statements	Ocean shoreline management/protection	Estuarine shoreline management/protection	Hurricane and coastal storm hazard mitigation	Traffic and transportation	Wastewater disposal/water quality	Stormwater control	Water supply and distribution	Economic development	Housing	Visual and aesthetic resources	Recreation and open space	Nags Head Woods	Police and fire protection	Solid waste	Public participation/Intergovernmental coordination
1	Beach nourishment as our preferred alternative However, the Town also supports a variety of other methods to abate the impacts of ocean erosion	•	•		•	•				•	•	•					
2	Beach nourishment; commensurate funding; and statewide beach management strategy, and policy with dedicated funding	•	•														
3	Important elements of our ocean beaches	•	•		•		•			•			•	•			
4	The Commercial-Outdoor Recreational Uses Overlay Zoning District	•		•	•		•	•		•			•	•			
5	Mitigation and innovative programs	•	•	•	•			•		•							
6	Higher flood regulatory standards	•	•	•	•			•									
7	NCDOT and road improvements	•				•											
8	Thoroughfare Plan	•				•				•							
9	Town streets	•				•				•							
10	Wider street right-of-ways for certain Town streets	•			•	•				•							
11	Sidewalks and NCDOT	•	•			•				•							
12	Sidewalks and Town streets	•				•				•							
13	Sidewalks and pedestrian infrastructure improvements for new subdivisions	•				•				•							
14	On-site septic systems as preferred method of sewage treatment and disposal	•	•	•			•			•	•						
15	Need for additional water quality regulations and enforcement	•	•	•			•										

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16 Evaluate and update the Stormwater Management Plan	•		•				•									
17 Maintenance of stormwater outfalls by NCDOT and alternative methods for land disposal of stormwater	•	•	•			•	•									
18 Proper public notification and protocol for ocean beach health closures	•	•	•			•										
19 Assessing the Town's water processing capacity, storage capacity, and distribution system needs	•							•	•							
20 High occupancy vacation and seasonal rental houses	•	•							•	•	•				•	
21 Town self-sufficiency, adequate services and amenities in a flexible, cost effective, customer friendly manner	•							•	•						•	
22 Aging housing stock, incentives, regulations, and the "Nags Head image"	•									•	•					
23 Open space and green space	•	•	•								•	•	•			
24 The historic district	•	•									•					
25 Community appearance, architectural image, and heritage	•								•		•					
26 Preservation of dunes, vegetation, and topography	•	•	•	•					•		•	•	•			
27 Storm damaged homes and structures on the oceanfront	•	•		•		•			•	•	•					
28 Expansion of ocean and estuarine recreational access sites, uses and activities	•	•	•						•			•	•			

Table 24.1. Interrelationships of Policies Policies *	Mission and Vision Statements	Ocean shoreline management/protection	Estuarine shoreline management/protection	Hurricane and coastal storm hazard mitigation	Traffic and transportation	Wastewater disposal/water quality	Stormwater control	Water supply and distribution	Economic development	Housing	Visual and aesthetic resources	Recreation and open space	Nags Head Woods	Police and fire protection	Solid waste	Public participation/Intergovernmental coordination
29 Development of traditional recreation facilities	•								•		•	•				
30 Designation of Nags Head Woods as an Area of Environmental Concern	•										•	•				
31 Assessing the needs of police, fire, and ocean rescue	•													•		
32 Fire protection, site plan review, and zoning	•													•		
33 Effective and economical methods for the collection, disposal, and recycling of solid wastes	•								•	•					•	
34 Communication with residents and non-resident property owners	•															•

* See discussion for full text of policies.

What is Consensus?

Basics of Consensus
By Rob Sandelin.

What is Consensus?

Consensus is a group process where the input of everyone is carefully considered and an outcome is crafted that best meets the needs of the group. It is a process of synthesizing the wisdom of all the participants into the best decision possible at the time. The root of consensus is the word consent, which means to give permission to. When you consent to a decision, you are giving your permission to the group to go ahead with the decision. You may disagree with the decision, but based on listening to everyone else's input, all the individuals agree to let the decision go forward, because the decision is the best one the entire group can achieve at the current time.

The heart of consensus is a cooperative intent, where the members are willing to work together to find the solution that meets the needs of the group. The cooperative nature of consensus is different mindset from the competitive nature of majority voting. In a consensus process the members come together to find or create the best solutions by working together. Key attributes to successfully participation include humility, willingness to listen to others and see their perspectives, and willingness to share your own ideas but not insist they are the best ones.

What consensus is not

It is not unanimous agreement. Participants may consent to an decision they disagree with, but recognize meets the needs of the group and therefore give permission to.

Why use consensus?

Consensus gathers the experiences from the whole group. Within every member of any group there is a lifetime of experiences and knowledge. Consensus is a way to tap the collective knowledge of the group to craft the best decision possible.

Consensus builds relationships between people

In a consensus process, people extend their relationships to each other as part of the listening and talking process. Consensus takes time and effort, honest communication and a willingness to trust the relationship. The communication of ideas and feelings, and the empathetic listening, builds trust and bonds between group members. By encouraging shared leadership and participation, consensus empowers all the members of a group to make the best decision. By working together to clarify ideas and proposals, the members build trust and communication skills that continue to grow and expand as the group works together. The longer the group works together, the better they get. The synergy of building collaborative agreements also builds a strong sense of commitment to the group and its mission, and a sense of belonging and commitment among the members.

Consensus moves toward doing what is best for the common interest. In the process of defining individual boundaries and issues within the group context, individual desires and boundaries are

tested against the best interests of the group. The key element of making consensus work is a commitment by each individual to honor the best interests of the group. As people work through issues, they have their own needs reflected back to them against the context of the larger group needs. This encourages them to consider other interests beyond just their own.

Consensus agreements need less enforcement

Once an agreement is made, and everyone gives their consent to it, the agreement is backed by the relationship. If you honor your relationship to the group, your respect for the agreements which you participated in guides you to follow the agreement. Agreements made by consensus are self enforced and rarely require anything more than a reminder of the agreement to ensure compliance. Consensus means everyone has given permission for the agreement to go ahead, and by not following through on the agreement, you jeopardize your relationship and your sense of community. If the desire for community relationship is strong, then the decisions made by the groups consensus will also be strong. There is no subgroup of angry, outvoted participants that will work to undermine the decision or ignore it.

Ingredients of successful consensus process

Facilitation.
Some of the group members have an understanding and the skills for running a consensus process.

Participants understand the process.
The participants have a basic understanding of what consensus is, how the group applies it, and what the expectations of the group are.

Participation.
Group members need to be present for the discussion part of the decision so your ideas can be shared, and you hear the other perspectives and ideas.

Cooperation.
A willingness among the participants to trust the wisdom of the group and to cooperate.

A safe place to talk about the decision at hand.
The group environment needs to be comfortable so that individuals will freely share their ideas and thoughts, fears, opinions and experiences.

Ideas are heard and acknowledged.
Each participant feels that their contributions are considered. They might not be part of the final solution but the ideas were fairly and equally considered.

Decisions are Documented
When the group agrees, the agreement is captured in writing so the group can refer to it later.

The process is reviewed
At some interval, the decision process is evaluated. Meeting elements and decision processes that are working are identified to be continued. Things which are not working well are examined and changed.

 A Three stage process for consensus

Consensus decision process typically goes through three stages: Discussion, Proposal, Modification.

The discussion stage is where the group meets and the topic is widely discussed. People freely share thoughts, opinions, feelings, ideas and react to each others contributions. This is the heart of consensus, because it is where you come together and synthesize all the thoughts. This is also where your opinions, if you have any, are subject to change as you listen and hear other perspectives. When a person misses this stage, they are seriously handicapped in their ability to help the group, because they did not hear any other perspectives to help them modify their own thinking, thus they are limited to only their own perspective.

The proposal stage comes after the discussion stage. The thoughts and ideas are synthesized into one or more proposal statements. This is where a good facilitator adds a great value, because they look for the common areas of understanding and agreement and bring those out and summarize them for the group. As the common ground emerges from the discussion, or as common ground is created, it is captured in writing.

The modification stage is where the summary proposal is tested and modified to meet the needs of the group. In some cases this is done at the same meeting, by adjusting the working draft of the proposal by including, removing, or modifying the language of the proposal. In other situations this is done weeks or months after the meeting, as the decision is implemented and new things are learned from the experiences, and so the decision is reviewed and amended as new information becomes available. Or in larger groups, a small group takes the discussion information, creates proposals and comes back at a later time with a proposal for modification.

How do you know you have consensus?
When all the participants give permission for the proposal to go ahead, consensus is reached. Typically the facilitator will ask the group for an affirmation of the proposal and at that time everyone signals their consent.

Blocking decisions

After the modification stage, if the final solution is not acceptable as being the best interest for the group, then it is the duty of the participants to not give permission to the group to move forward at this time. If the modification process is done well, blocking is almost never used. The facilitator should clarify with the blocker, how the group interests is not being served by moving ahead with the proposal.

One of the key elements here, is that blocking is done for the best interests of the group, not to serve personal likes and dislikes. Remember, even if you disagree with a decision, you can give permission to the group to proceed in order for the group to learn things. Often a group must

make decisions with out all the information needed or all issues resolved. Moving forward is sometimes the way to understand what will happen as you implement a decision.

Standing aside

A common problem in consensus groups is where there is a values clash between personal and group values. For example, say it is a personal value of some group members to honor all life, but this value is not held by the group as whole. This value comes up during a discussion about vegetarianism at meals. In this case, since the groups stated values are not supporting the personal values, rather than expecting the whole group to become vegetarian to support a personal value, the person stands aside and does not participate in the activity that they find offensive to their values. Often personal values can be included in a solution that works for the group. Where it can't, the values are respected by allowing the individual to stand aside. Stand asides should be noted in the minutes so it is clear that the person standing aside should not be asked to implement or participate in the decision due to their values.

Typical problems groups have using consensus

Lack of participation
For consensus to work, a large majority of the membership, ideally a minimum of 80%, needs to be present for the discussion phase of the decision. Those not present during this phase need to be brought up to speed. Some consensus groups sign up to be buddies for those not present, and the buddies job is to convey the perspectives of the meeting to the person not present. When half or less of a group participates, the group misses too much perspectives and decisions end up poorly made, and often unsupported by those that missed the discussion.

People who miss the discussion but come in on the proposal.
When people miss the discussion, and its perspectives, they may bring up the same conversations and points that the rest of the group has already been through. If this occurs regularly, people may become resentful of those that don't participate in the discussions, or may even stop coming to meetings because they end up rehashing the same discussions over and over again. Many consensus groups do not allow those not present for the discussion stage to be part of the proposal and modification stages, or have special considerations for those that did not participate in the discussion. Participation in the full cycle of the consensus process is a important for a successful consensus decision.

The meeting environment discourages contributions.
If there is a lot of cross talking, or loud rebuttals, or sarcastic tones it will keep some people from sharing their ideas. In the worse cases people are personally insulted, belittled, or laughed at. It is unlikely in such an environment people would feel good about being part of the process and willingly contribute ideas that might add value but run counter to the ideas of others in the group. If there is a strong hierarchy in the group, for example a dominate person such as a supervisor, it can affect peoples willingness to bring up all the ideas, especially those that might run counter to the bosses opinions.

Poor communication of decisions, agendas and information.
If you don't know when or where the meeting is, you can't attend. If you don't hear about the agenda of the meeting, you have no time to think about it before the meeting. Some people do need time to get think, they don't do well having to process ideas and information immediately.

Everyone consents but puts no energy behind it
A decision is reached, everyone consents to it, but it never gets done. This occurs when the during the modification stage of the proposal, the "who will do this work" question does not get asked or resolved. At the end of the modification process a plan can be added for who does the work and how they will be held accountable for the work.

An individual inappropriately uses blocking
The groups interests are not being served by a block, for example a person blocks a decision from their own preferences or as a power play over the group. Or a personal threatens to block even before the discussion phase is held. This is where the facilitator needs to help the group negotiate by defining what is the real issue. Often there are hidden issues unresolved which are driving the individual to block. In the final case, a majority vote can override an inappropriate use of blocking.

Group member contributions
How to be an effective member of a collaborative process

Know yourself

Your personal behavior has impacts on the groupEvery person in a collaborative process effects the process. Think about how you impact the group. What assets do you bring? What liabilities? Think about how you might work to keep your liabilities in check as the group works together. How can you remind yourself not to do that behavior that causes problems?

Personality Style
Every person has a Personality style. In it's simplest form you can examine whether you are task or feelings oriented. Do you want to get things done, or do you want to hear about how people feel about it? Maybe you don't know and so you might ask how others perceive you. How you relate and react to people that have opposite needs than you has a great impact on the groups work.

Hot buttons
Hot buttons are those things that get an instant angry response. They often come from events in our lives that shaped our values and are not often things we can control. What kinds of things make you mad? Remember, a skillful antagonist might be able to manipulate you by pushing your hot buttons to get you to react. Know them and be aware of your response when those issues come up.

Physical factors
When you are hungry do you get irritable? If you are tired do you have less patience than normal? If you have an injury or soreness that is hurting you does it change how you react to others? You can defuse this often just by admitting it out loud to the group. "When I get hungry I get cranky. I am sorry if I am not working well right now, but its right before lunch which is my worse time"

Emotional state

When something is causing you distress you are in an abnormal emotional state and like the physical factors, this may cause atypical behaviors. When you can do so, alert the group to your distress and warn them of potential consequences. "I am feeling sad today because my dad is really sick and I was up late last night worrying about him. I apologize if I am less patient than usual for today's meeting.

Perspective

How you see the world may not be how it really is. The way you do things, is not necessarily the right way, even if that's how your momma taught you. It is often difficult for us to see in our viewpoints and judgments in the many things we believe or take for granted because of cultural and family indoctrinations which have saturated us since our earliest childhoods. A classic example of this can be found in how clean people are about their houses or personal spaces. Some folks spend lots of time cleaning and putting their processions in a very specific order. Other folks are much less orderly and spend little time cleaning. Most often this comes from the way your family lived and how you were raised. This difference is often a source of conflict as each cleanliness perspective views itself as being the "right way". If you view yourself as being right then those not like you must be wrong. This right and wrong judgmental thinking is often the root of conflicts within groups.

Identify your closures

What things are you closed about? What ideas are you simply not going to accept? This closed mindedness comes from your personal values and its good to identify these and understand them. When these things become out of sync with the group you are in, it is very hard to continue working in that group. For example, a person that believes that all animal life is sacred, will not succeed well on a farm that slaughters its livestock.

Humility

A key element to making consensus work is personal humility. By recognizing the limits of your own experiences you open the way to learn new things.

Over generalizing experiences

It is easy to over generalize from experiences, for example, because you once had problems with a Ford brand of car, all Ford cars are lemons. This kind of over generalizing from experience inhibits your ability to see that experiences are not always repeated in the same way, with the same outcomes.

A perspectives test

A good test for how open you are to another perspective is how well you can explain it to someone else with fairness and without making judgmental remarks or using negative tones.

Meeting Actions

There are several behaviors which have been shown to be helpful to many collaborative groups. Each of these behaviors can be learned, practiced and form skill sets which members can be trained to excel at. It can be helpful to adopt these, and other helpful behaviors as group ground

rules and post them to remind yourselves to follow them. A good facilitator can use such ground rules to intervene and help the group succeed.

Be a good listener
Listen carefully and ask for clarification, especially about why people think or feel as they do. Never interrupt. Ask questions to clarify what the issue is and why is it an issue.

Be solution centered
Don't just criticize, suggest solutions and ideas for solving problems. Be sure to state the problem clearly as you can before trying to apply solutions.

Use the right group
Sometimes the wrong set of people spend a lot of time trying to solve a problem that is outside their scope of experience or expertise. Maybe a small group of experts might be better than the large group.

Be open to outcome
Look fairly and equally at all the pros and cons of all ideas. Don't come with "THE PLAN" come with " an idea". Then see where the group expands it and be open to the change. Don't own ideas, give them away to the group. Don't lobby your idea, encourage the group to look at all the pros and cons. Don't set unnecessary limits.

Be concise
Think out what you are going to say before you say it and then be brief. Don't ramble, don't repeat what others have said. If you think the same as someone else who has already spoken, then simply say, " I agree with __".

Be patient
Others may need more time to understand, or need more information. Consensus is NOT a fast decision making process. Be willing to let others have the time they need.

Take a dose of humility
The answer that suits your needs does not mean it's the best answer for everyone, or that what meets your needs meets the needs of others. Learn to say to yourself: I might be wrong. Be willing to learn what lessons the group can teach you. Even if you are the expert.

Take ownership of your feelings and share them when it's needed. If you feel unhappy, or uncomfortable say so and try to pinpoint why. Also don't forget to say you are happy or grateful as well.

Take a long term view
Many decisions and proposals are learning experiences for things you have not yet done. If it does not work, you can change it later. Try things out.

Experiment. Be willing to try on new ideas and processes. This is an adventure
to be explored.

Learn when to let go
Many things a group decides can be redone later. Don't get hung up on small details, let the decision go forward and then examine it later to see if your misgivings were justified or not.

Use I statements to define your needs
When you have things you want or need, tell the group what they are by using I statements such as " I need covered parking because I have an old car that leaks".

Give the reasons behind your thinking
Whenever you state an opinion, you can add valuable information by giving others the reasons for your opinion. Be open to questions and comments about your opinions.

Ask for feedback
Ask others to tell you what they think. Invite others to offer ideas and suggestions. Encourage folks to talk with you about things that you do that bother them.

Clean up your messes
When you say the wrong thing, or act in a way that hurts, angers or alienates others, talk later to discuss what happened and why with those who were affected.

Intervene to help the group
Even if you are not the facilitator, if you notice something is going well, complement the group or person. If things are not going right, try to state what you perceive to be happening and ask for feedback. " It seems when ever we start talking about childcare, I hear angry tones in peoples statements" Does anybody else sense this?" Can we process this emotion to find out what's behind it?"

Do your homework
Don't wait until the meeting to get or give information. Call people, hold small gatherings, etc. Read everything you are given closely and think about it before the meeting.